

FRENCH REVOLUTION AS A WORLD
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war in 1793, England was stampeded into panic with Pitt at her head. The majority of the Whigs joined the Government, while Fox and Grey, with a handful of courageous followers, kept alive the flickering flame of liberalism with infinite difficulty. The hands of the clock were put back for a generation. But for the Revolution Parliament might have been reformed, Nonconformists freed from their disabilities, and the Slave Trade abolished before the end of the eighteenth century. Not till nearly forty years later had England sufficiently recovered from the shock to take up the work of reform where it had been dropped by Pitt like a hot coal.

"I observe that minds are fermenting in that Germany of yours," wrote Mirabeau to his Brunswick friend Mauvillon at the end of 1789, "but since your brains are petrified with slavery, the explosion will come with you much rather than with us." The great tribune's prophecy proved correct, for the main impact of the Revolution was felt in Germany after the acute crisis in France was past. Early scenes of the compelling drama on 'the Seine were loudly applauded by the *elite* of Central Europe, and the war against France was never waged with enthusiasm. When military blunders, financial stringency, jealousy of Austria, and the complications of the Polish question induced Prussia to sign the Treaty of Basle in 1795, the causes of the collapse of the army of Frederick the Great before the levies of the Republic were eagerly canvassed and were generally agreed to lie in the lack of national spirit. But it was not till the stricken field of Jena that even the King realized he must break with the past. Those who approved and those who detested the principles of '89 agreed that Germany must learn the lessons of the years of strife. Through-

out Europe a truceless conflict was in progress between the *ancien regime* and the ideas of '89; and when a State or a statesman decided to break with feudalism they were compelled to study and to some extent to adopt French models. As the abstract ideas of 1789 had appealed to the thinkers and writers of Germany, so their concrete results, stamped boldly across the map of Europe, converted experienced statesmen to a policy of sweeping reform. " If the nation is to be uplifted," declared Stein, " the submerged part must be given liberty, independence, property, and the protection of the kws"; and in his short-lived Ministry he began the emancipation of the peasants of Prussia and granted self-government